THE NATIONAL MULTICULTURAL WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM ANNOUNCES 21st ANNUAL DR. MARION J. BROOKS LIVING LEGEND AWARD RECIPIENTS

Fort Worth, TX...The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum (NMWHM) will honor outstanding civic and community leaders at the 21st Annual Dr. Marion J. Brooks Living Legend Award Ceremony on Thursday, June 5th from 5:30 to 8 PM at the Fort Worth Library located at 500 W. Third Street.

The Dr. Marion J. Brooks Living Legend Award is presented to area citizens who have dedicated their lives to community service. This year’s honorees include: Alene Washington - Community Service, Erma Bonner Platte - Arts & Culture, Johnnie L. Young - Government, Devoyd Jennings - Business and Dennis L. Dunkins, Sr. - Education. “Tim Grace and I started recognizing area living legends 21 years ago,” says NMWHM Co-founder Jim Austin. “We are honoring Texas' very best and we are excited to salute these individuals upon whose shoulders many others in the community have stood.”

The mission of the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum and Hall of Fame is to offer patrons a true and complete historical perspective of the people and activities that built the unique culture of the American West. The work of artists who documented the people and events of the time through journals, photographs and other historical items are part of the museum's new collection.

To attend the 2014 Dr. Marion J. Brooks Living Legends Award Ceremony, RSVP to info@cowboysofcolor.org by Tuesday, June 3rd at 5 PM. Admission is free. For more information about the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum visit www.cowboysofcolor.org or call 817.922.9999.

(more)
ABOUT THE HONOREES

ERMA BONNER-PLATTE (ARTS & CULTURE HONOREE)

Erma Bonner-Platte was born July 11, 1934. She is artistically known as E LaRue.

Mrs. Platte is a native of Marshall, Texas and has been a resident of Fort Worth, Texas for several decades. This petite Texan walks tall and carries watercolor pencils. Mrs. Bonner-Platte is a gifted woman that is exemplary as a botanist, computer scientist, educator, community activist, humanitarian, artist and real estate broker. In typical AKA style she has risen to the top and is a member of Fort Worth’s own Society of Watercolor Artists. Her art won entrance into a table book which is an artistic salute to Oprah Winfrey by Janelle Vaughn Dowell. She will be a special guest on Breaking Bread Café television program in Atlanta, Georgia to share about her art. Her work was recently awarded by the Armor Bearer for “Leaving a legacy for your city, nation and the world”.

Mrs. Platte is a member of Fort Worth’s historic 100+ year old Our Mother of Mercy Catholic Church under the leadership of Reverend Jerome LeDoux SVD. She is an alumni of the historic I.M. Terrell High School, Fort Worth, Texas and Wiley College. She graduated from Wiley with a BS in Chemistry. Mrs. Platte also attended Texas Southern University and North Texas University studying Art Education. Erma Bonner-Platte is an AKA and was a member of the Federated Women Club Int. of Fort Worth Texas. Every civic minded she has served on numerous boards such as: Fort Worth’s Commission for Historical Preservation, the board of the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society, and the DFW Claude R. Platte Tuskegee Airmen Chapter.

DENNIS L. DUNKINS, SR. (EDUCATION HONOREE)

Dennis Dunkins was born in Fort Worth, TX, September 18, 1940. He attended James E. Guinn Elementary School and graduated from Fort Worth’s Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School in 1958. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from North Texas State University (UNT) in Industrial Arts and his Master of Arts degree from Texas Woman’s University in Sociology. He has a Human Resource Management Certificate from Tarrant County Community College and recently organized his own educational consulting company.

Mr. Dunkins began his professional working career with Fort Worth ISD teaching one year (63-64) and moving on to General Motors (1963-74) in the capacity of Line Inspector, clerk/Broadcast Engineer, and assistant supervisor Salvage Department. He owned and operated his personal business (Fairhaven Office Supply from 1968-83). Mr. Dunkins returned to Fort Worth ISD in 1980 as Director of Magnet Planning and remained in that position until 2000. During this time he managed annual budgets in excess of nine million dollars and supervised some 145 staff members. In 2000, became the Ombudsman (EEOC Officer) for Fort Worth ISD.
DEVOYD JENNINGS (BUSINESS HONOREE)
A native of Fort Worth, Devoyd Jennings grew up supporting the gold and blue at I.M. Terrell High School graduating in 1966. He enrolled at Tarrant County College and later attended Texas Wesleyan University, graduating with a degree in Marketing in 1971.

In 1973, Mr. Jennings began a 27-year journey with TXU/ONCOR management and as a lobbyist/Community Affairs Specialist, where he lobbied government legislative bodies, agencies and private officials concerning energy policy. Having grown up in the city, Mr. Jennings has taken the leadership role in a number of community and civic issues. He has served on numerous boards including, The Texas Association of Business – 1995 to present, Texas Wesleyan University – 1989 to 2006, North Texas Commission – 1993 to 2003 and is past chairman for the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber - 1986 to 1992, Chairman of the Texas Association of African American Chambers - 1992 to 2000. He served as Chairman of the Business Diversity Advisory Council of the North Texas Toll Authority, and currently President & CEO of the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce.

In 2005 and 1992, the city of Fort Worth honored Mr. Jennings with a proclamation for Devoyd Jennings Day. He was recognized by the Small Business Administration as the “Small Business Advocate of the Year” in 1997, and in 1999, he was featured by the Fort Worth Business Press as Who’s Who in Economic Development and received the Deal Maker Award from the Business Press in 1998. Mr. Jennings resides in Forest Hill, Texas with his wife of 33 years, Gwen Barbee. When not actively engaged as President and CEO of the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, he spends time relaxing with immediate family and grand children.

ARLENE WASHINGTON (COMMUNITY SERVICE HONOREE)
Alene Washington has served as Senior Director at Fellowship Corner Senior Center for 40 years. Born in Fort Worth, Texas, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ellis and Olean Pruitt Hart is a lifetime resident of Fort Worth. A graduate of I.M. Terrell High School, Ms. Washington has devoted her life to caring for her community, especially the elderly.

Most recently, Ms. Washington was the recipient of the President’s Award for Service awarded by Senior Citizen Services of Tarrant County. She was honored at the Senior Spirit Award Luncheon for her devoted service. When asked the reason she has been able to devote so many years to Fellowship Corner seniors her humble answer was simply “I love my job. I love what I do.” Senior Citizen Services of Tarrant County Executive Director Jerome Mosman explains, “Alene truly cares about the older generation and respects the blessing they are to our community. Her “Steppin’ Grannies” dance group is well known throughout the city.”

JOHNNIE L. YOUNG (GOVERNMENT HONOREE)

Johnnie L. Young has served in the position of Senior Housing Program Advisor with the Office of Housing Counseling in the Outreach and Capacity Branch and on the National Supervisory Team with the Department of Housing and Urban Development since September 2012. During this period, he provided input at the Supervisory Team to establish a “Mission Statement” for the new Office of Housing Counseling. During this period, Young served on the Hurricane Sandy Disaster Handbook/Guideline team where he received accolades for the resources he provided in the establishment of this document. Mr. Young served as a Team Leader for the 2013 NOFA Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Review Team. Currently, he serves on the HECM Handbook Revision Team and volunteered to complete two Performance Reviews for High HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Agencies in Houston, Texas. During this period, Young chaired the 10th Annual City of Fort Worth Housing Summit that was co-sponsored by the City of Fort Worth, Fort Worth Housing Authority and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

During the period of April 2009 to September 2012, Young served in the position of Supervisory Housing Program Specialist, Region VI, with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) located in Fort Worth, Texas. During this period, he established two additional HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Agencies, (Debt Education and Certification Foundation and East Dallas Community Organization. Also, Dallas Habitat for Humanities and Midland Community Development Corporation were approved as a HUD-Approved Non-Profit Organization. During this period, Mr. Young chaired the 8th and 9th Annual City of Fort Worth Housing Summits that was co-sponsored by the City of Fort Worth, Fort Worth Housing Authority and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Mr. Young began his career with HUD as a Single Family Loan Servicer. In November of 1992, he accepted a transfer to the Fort Worth Multifamily Property Disposition Center as a Multifamily Realty Specialist. As a Realty Specialist, he received several awards including the Commissioner’s Award.

Mr. Young is very active in the community; he is a member of Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church, lifetime member of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. recipient of the Boy Scouts of America’s District Award of Merit and Silver Beaver Award, the highest honor for a volunteer.

He currently resides in Fort Worth, Texas with his wife, Cecile Fay Young. Also, he has one child, Dominique H. Young, a 2010 graduate of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (2010) and Texas Tech University (2012) currently serving as a Student Program Manager, Human Resource Department with Rural Development, United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC.